

352.0786612
M15C
1981

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS
MEAGHER COUNTY
MONTANA

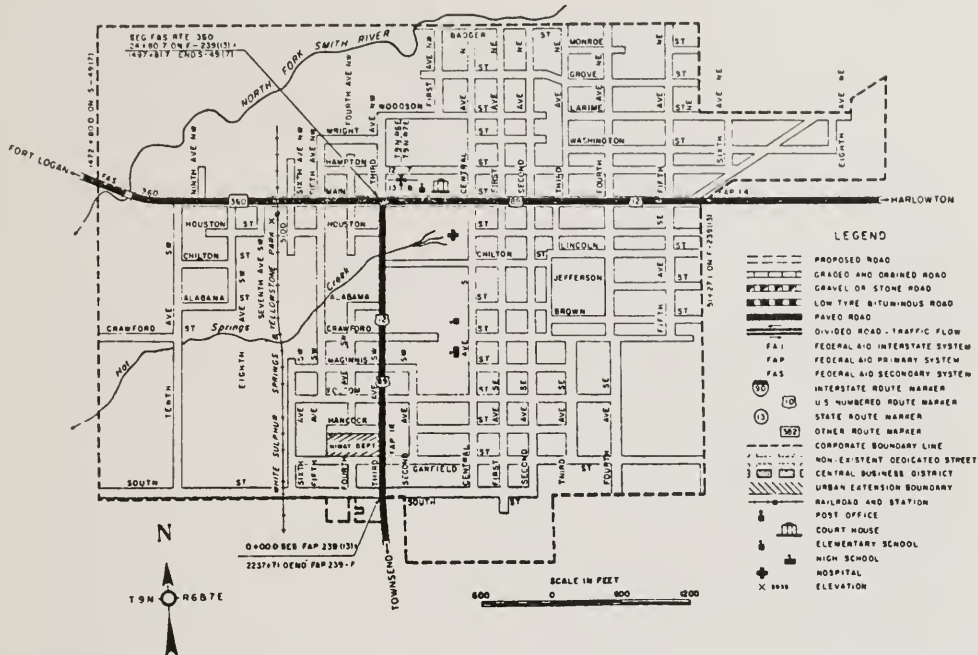
meagher county
planning board

January 1981

Montana State Library



3 0864 1004 7640 0



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Funded in Part by a Grant From
the Department of Housing and Urban Development

Administered by
the Department of Community Affairs
the State of Montana

January 1981

**meagher county
planning board**

TELEPHONE (406) 547-3738

P.O. BOX 309, 15 WEST MAIN STREET

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MONTANA 59645

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Chapter I -- Introduction	
Introduction -----	1
Introduction to the Area -----	2
Physical Characteristics -----	2
Cultural Characteristics -----	3
Planning Area -----	4
Chapter II -- Goals and Objectives	
Goals and Objectives -----	5
I. Housing -----	8
II. Employment -----	9
III. Recreation -----	9
IV. Industry and Economy -----	9
V. Land Use -----	10
VI. Public Facilities and Services -----	11
Review and Updating of Policy Planning Guidelines -----	11
Chapter III -- Land Use For White Sulphur Springs Area	
Function of Land Use Information -----	12
Existing Land Use of the Urban Area of White Sulphur Springs, Montana -----	12
Map of Existing Land Use -----	12A
Chapter IV -- Land Use Problems and Recommendations	
Land Use Problems -----	13
I. Within the City Limits -----	13
II. Outside the City Limits -----	13
Land Use Recommendations -----	14
I. Within the City Limits -----	14
II. Outside the City Limits -----	15

Chapter V -- Public Services and Facilities

Public Programs and Facilities -----	16
Government -----	16
Fire Protection -----	17
Ambulance Service -----	18
Public Library -----	19
Water System -----	20
Sewer System -----	23
Law Enforcement -----	24
Solid Waste -----	25
Education -----	26
Medical Facilities -----	27
Museums -----	28
Senior Citizens Facilities -----	29
Recreation -----	30
Transportation -----	31
1. Airports -----	32
2. Busses -----	32
3. Railroads -----	33
4. Truck Freight Transport -----	33
5. Highways -----	33
6. Streets and Local Roads -----	34
Utilities -----	35
Communications -----	36
1. Television -----	36
2. Radio -----	36
3. Newspaper -----	36
4. Postal Services -----	36
5. Telephone -----	36

	PAGE
Chapter VI -- Housing Study	
Housing -----	38
Sub-standard Housing Survey -----	38
Community Survey -----	39
Analysis of Housing Situation -----	41
Chapter VII -- Population and Economic Study	
Population -----	44
Economy -----	44
Chapter VIII -- Recommended Policies	
Annexation -----	46
Zoning -----	46
Appendix	
Related Planning -----	48
Bibliography -----	50

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

White Sulphur Springs was incorporated as a city of the 3rd class in 1888 under the laws of the State of Montana. To date, technical planning activities have been handled by the city's administrative personnel and, since 1973, consultation on planning or development problems has been available from the Meagher County Planning Board.

Other than initial guidance provided for the city in the Meagher County Comprehensive Plan dated July 1977, White Sulphur Springs has not set forth nor adopted comprehensive guidelines and strategies for future growth and development of the city. Recognizing the need for planning, in addition to the increasing tempo of land development in areas adjacent to the city, the City of White Sulphur Springs formally joined with Meagher County to form a joint city-county planning board in 1978. The planning board has now embarked upon a planning program, to develop policies, guidelines and strategies for the future growth and development of White Sulphur Springs. To this end, the following summary outlines issues and opportunities to which the planning effort has been directed:

- A. Formulation of short and long term goals.
- B. Preparation of planning area base maps.
- C. Inventory of current land use.
- D. Analysis of population, demographic trends in planning & region.
- E. Develop the city's master comprehensive plan.
- F. Review and develop a city street plan.
- G. Develop a general annexation and zoning policy.
- H. Develop an outline for a capital improvement program.

To provide guidance and direction, emphasis has been placed on citizen participation. A survey of the community was made to find out what the people think of their community and what they would like to see changed within the community.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AREA

ACCESS

U.S. Highway 12, a major interstate highway, passes directly through White Sulphur Springs. This highway provides a major and important transportation link with other key transportation and communication routes in the urban area. Garrison Junction, 122 miles to the west, intersects with Interstate 90, which is the major east-west route over the northern United States. U.S. Highway 89 also passes through White Sulphur Springs and provides the north-south service. To the south, it traverses Yellowstone Park; to the north it intersects with Interstate 15 at Great Falls and later parallels the eastern boundary of Glacier National Park before it enters Canada.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

White Sulphur Springs is located at the approximate geographic center of Montana. It is within the tri-county region consisting of Meagher, Park and Gallatin counties. White Sulphur Springs is the county seat and the only incorporated town in Meagher County. The other unincorporated towns in the county are Ringling, 23 miles to the south; Lennep, 33 miles southeast; Martinsdale, 33 miles east; and Checkerboard, 20 miles east.

The topography is typical of that found on the east slope of the Rocky Mountains. White Sulphur Springs lies in the Smith River Valley, surrounded by three mountain ranges; the Big Belt Range to the west, the Little Belt Range to the north and the Castle Mountains to the southeast. The elevation at White Sulphur Springs is 5,180 feet above sea level.

The tri-county region east of the Rocky Mountains, can generally be characterized as agricultural in nature with urban nodes at intersections of transportation. However, this generalized character is in the process of change due to the large amounts of public and private land which hold or have been developed for recreation-oriented purposes. This, coupled with a semi-arid climate, low rainfall and a high percentage of sunshine, provides an environment which is luring an ever-increasing number of people to live or spend their leisure time in this region.

The vegetation of Meagher County is indicative of a semi-arid climate. The climate is rather rigorous and the growing season, 60 to 90 days, is relatively short. There is a wide variation of daily and seasonal temperatures and precipitation. Precipitation has averaged 18.46 inches annually at White Sulphur Springs. June has the most precipitation, averaging 3.28 inches; January has the least, averaging 0.95 inch. The average temperature is 41.8 degrees fahrenheit.

CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

In early years the medicinal value of the springs was first recognized by the Indians. The Smith River Valley was used by many tribes as a route to and from summer hunting grounds. All tribes stopping to bathe in the "Wampum Waters" claimed peace in the neutral territory.

In 1864 a man by the name of James Brewer came to Montana Territory and built the first cabin east of the Belt Range and Diamond City, at a spot later to be known as Trinity Springs. The Flathead Indians told Brewer of the medicinal "hot springs" located in the Smith River Valley, it was to this spot that Brewer then moved. By 1872 he had constructed a bathhouse with three single bathrooms and one 12' X 12' plunge. Baths cost 75 cents, whiskey was extra. The hotel, a short distance to the north, was made up of a cluster of individual cabins, all constructed of logs with dirt roofs.

In 1876, James Brewer sold 50% of his holdings to Dr. Parberry, who later acquired the remainder. Postal service was established in that year and "Brewer Springs" became "White Sulphur Springs" by order of the Post Office Department. Parberry's townsite was located in 1878. Two years later, in 1880, White Sulphur Springs replaced Diamond City as the county seat.

On April 14, 1888, an election was held to vote upon the question of the incorporation of the town of White Sulphur Springs. The results of that election were 48 ballots for incorporation, 7 ballots against. White Sulphur Springs was then declared to be a city of the second class. A resolution was filed the same day declaring the city be changed to a city of the third class, which it still is today.

By 1898 the county seat had a population of 800 people and listed 218 taxpayers. The town was growing and business was then being conducted by one large store, two drug stores, two livery stables, one harness shop,

one meat market, a saloon or two and then some, a good newspaper and two first class banks. Present day White Sulphur Springs has grown to a population of 1,400 people. The times have changed the town. The livery stables and harness shop have been replaced by a car dealership and several service stations. The days of the general mercantile are gone, but many of these services remain in individual businesses. The hot springs continue to exist. Now known as the Spa, it consists of a motel, out-door naturally heated pool and mineral baths.

Mining, agriculture and logging in this order, were the main industries that developed the community. Agriculture and logging are still responsible for the economy of the area today. While mining has diminished over the years, interest in the mineral potential of the area is increasing. Geological exploration and the development of this potential will influence the future growth of White Sulphur Springs.

PLANNING AREA

For planning purposes, two consecutively smaller subdivisions centering on the city have been developed. The largest division, the White Sulphur Springs Planning Area, is defined as the incorporated city and a one (1) mile area in the unincorporated area immediately surrounding the city. This division covers the area directly influenced by and identified with White Sulphur Springs. The second division is the White Sulphur Springs Urban Area, or the area within the city limits. The urban area has been used as the basis for gathering most inventory and planning data, as it permits a more realistic evaluation of land use studies dealing with the developed and undeveloped uses, densities, recreational facilities and schools.

CHAPTER II
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR
WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

One of the more important elements in any planning study is the drafting of a series of goals and objectives. Such a listing provides an insight into current land use problems within a community and also some perception as to where it is desired that the community go in the future. A listing of goals and objectives cannot be prepared by anyone other than the residents of the particular community being studied.

In an effort to gain maximum input into the goals and objectives process, the Planning Board prepared a questionnaire. The most significant information gathered from the questionnaire is summarized below. A complete copy of all questions and responses can be obtained at the office of the Meagher County Planning Board.

When asked what the single most important thing that would make living in White Sulphur Springs better for you; choices were rated:

- 1 -- more job opportunities
- 2 -- more shopping facilities
- 3 -- more recreational facilities

When asked what could happen in White Sulphur Springs to make living here worse; choices were rated:

- 1 -- increase in cost of public utilities
- 2 -- industry moving out of town
- 3 -- increase in population
- 4 -- less business activity

- 60.4% of those responding feel it is important for White Sulphur Springs to grow.
- 83.6% feel there is not enough housing for people here.
- 71.9% do not feel recreation and entertainment are adequate.
- 63.5% feel there are not enough job opportunities here.
- 59.6% think White Sulphur Springs should develop a program to attract industry.
- 65.6% think White Sulphur Springs should develop a program to attract tourists.

- 57.6% feel that the city should first concentrate on projects that would be funded by state and federal aid.
- 61.0% were in favor of concentrating similar activities, such as commercial, industrial and residential, in designated areas of town.
- 82.3% feel that the city and the local schools should develop a program to share equipment, programs and facilities.

When asked to rate 15 community services in White Sulphur Springs, the ones needing the most improvement were as follows:

- 1 -- water
- 2 -- law enforcement
- 3 -- sewer and street surfacing (rated equally)
- 4 -- parks and recreation
- 5 -- street maintenance
- 6 -- sidewalks

When asked if they would be in favor of water meters:

- 8% answered yes
- 92% answered no

When asked what retail shops or services were needed in White Sulphur Springs; the choices were rated:

- 1 -- recreational facilities
- 2 -- entertainment establishments
- 3 -- clothing stores
- 4 -- hotels and motels

- 84.4% of the community are buying or own their own homes
- 15.6% are renting
- 89.0% would prefer to live in single-family dwellings
- 33.6% of the housing is over 40 years old
- 28.6% is between 20 and 40 years old

- 39.8% of the households responding use wood heat either as their main source of heat or as a supplemental source
- 32.2% use propane as a source of heat
- 47.6% feel that the most important problem people have in obtaining housing is financing
- 21.3% feel it is availability of space on which to build
- 18.9% feel it is the lack of a down payment
- 27.0% feel single-family housing should be built in the area
- 19.1% feel a low-income housing complex should be built
- 18.9% feel senior citizens housing is needed

When asked about restrictions on future building in the city:

- 28.5% wanted industrial uses limited to designated areas of town
- 21.3% wanted commercial uses limited to designated areas of town
- 24.0% of the population is over 55 year of age
- 33.1% of the population is under 20 years of age
- 48 females are sole heads of households
- 68 persons 60 and over are sole heads of household
- 35.7% of the households are 2 member households
- 19.1% are 1 member households
- 14.7% are 4 member households

The income of 13.1% of the households responding to the survey are below poverty level.

- 31.1% are above poverty level, but still considered low income.

After a through review of the questionnaire, it was determined that the three most serious concerns of the community are:

Housing
Job Opportunities
Recreational Facilities

Meagher County is agriculturally oriented. The way of life is attractive to the residents of the county and it's economy has not materially varied over the years. Agriculture, government, forest products and recreation are the major economic factors, in that order, within the county.

Goals and objectives must look at the major concerns of the community, while preserving the agricultural orientation of the county. With this in mind the following Goals and Objectives have been prepared:

I. HOUSING

GOAL

To encourage a balanced mix of housing types and designate appropriate areas for residential development. To encourage diversified housing that will provide adequate shelter for all age and income groups. Set standards for residential densities that are compatible with the areas designated.

OBJECTIVES

- A. Actively support state, federal and private programs that will provide diversified housing for all age and income groups.
- B. Inform the public of programs designed to assist residents with improvement of existing housing and the criteria that must be met to qualify for such assistance.
- C. Based on the comprehensive plan, recommend adoption of regulations to control the density of development in the area lying one mile outside the city, in order to assure that annexation will be compatible with the future growth anticipated for the city.
- D. Encourage development of mobile home parks.
- E. Provide that subdivision locations be guided by present land use patterns and encourage the best location for various types of residential uses.
- F. Recommend adoption of a zoning ordinance for the city, in order to enhance property values and minimize conflict between different types of land uses.

II. EMPLOYMENT

GOAL

To encourage a mix of employment opportunities that will lessen the impact of high unemployment due to the seasonal nature of agriculture, forest products and recreation industries.

OBJECTIVES

- A. Develop and provide data relating to employment and assist interested firms, individuals, or organizations to achieve the industry and economy goal.
- B. Provide referral service to state and federal agencies or private organizations on behalf of local firms and development organizations.
- C. Assist local development agencies in their efforts to attract new employment sources in the area.
- D. Encourage the development of businesses and industries that will utilize the local work force.

III. RECREATION

GOAL

Allow quality recreational developments, but promote protection of the environment and the rights of individuals.

OBJECTIVES

- A. Encourage coordinate efforts by federal, state and local agencies and private developers to provide recreation facilities for city and county residents and tourists.
- B. Coordinate city and local school programs and facilities whenever possible.
- C. Upgrade present parks and facilities to provide more effective recreation.

IV. INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY

GOAL

Establish a climate that will encourage diversified economic growth and development. Examine and be selective in endorsing any industrial or commercial activity that may wish to locate in the city or surrounding area.

OBJECTIVES

- A. Enhance the agriculture, forest products and recreation segments of the economy by protecting the resources which support these activities.
- B. Assist in the broadening of the present economic base with supporting and related industries.
- C. Encourage development by those industries which have no adverse effect upon the character and natural environment.
- D. Encourage the creation of a local development group which would promote expansion of the economic base or improvement of the business environment.
- E. Provide information and statistics which could be used as a basis for an economic study.
- F. Assist local businessmen with any projects or plans for improvement of services and activities.
- G. Encourage the development of businesses and services that are not already available here.

V. LAND USE

GOAL

To identify land which is suitable for development.

OBJECTIVES

- A. Direct residential, commercial and industrial development to those areas which will expand present use areas without causing unnecessary conflict of interests.
- B. Keep subdivision regulations current to insure that reasonable design standards are followed in each development.
- C. Adopt zoning regulations that will provide for the (1) industrial, (2) commercial, (3) residential, and (4) recreational use of land.
- D. Gather and analyze resource data for each area.
- E. Involve the public in establishing specific objectives.
- F. Implement objectives through land use regulations and annexation policies.

VI. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

GOAL

Recommend needed governmental services. Ensure adequate planning to provide necessary facilities and services in an orderly and attractive manner.

OBJECTIVES

- A. Evaluate the effectiveness of all public services and when necessary develop specific programs for improvement.
- B. Reserve space to meet future needs for schools and public buildings.
- C. Require developers and subdividers to provide central utility systems and adequate streets.
- D. Encourage the development of adequate medical facilities and services for all residents.
- E. Actively seek out ways to improve service, avoid duplication and facilitate cooperation between all levels of government within the county.
- F. Utilization of the planning board in dealing with city and county-wide problems.

REVIEW AND UPDATING OF POLICY GUIDELINES

Community development is a continuing process. Guidelines to direct this development must be relevant and up to date. Future impacts or unforeseen community demands which cannot be anticipated at this point in time, clearly indicate that periodic review and revision is necessary to maintain current guidelines.

It is recommended that the planning board review these guidelines at least every two years. Such reviews should be oriented toward examining policies and recommendations in light of any significant changes or demands within the community which may indicate whether revisions should be recommended in policies, proposals and programs contained in these guidelines. As community development is a continuing process so is the process of shaping it's guidance.

CHAPTER III
LAND USE FOR WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS AREA

FUNCTION OF LAND USE INFORMATION

Land use information for a planning area includes two elements, the map and the narrative description.

The base map, shown on page 12A, illustrates the present land uses. The uses shown are private land uses including residential, commercial and industrial uses. An important function of this map is to illustrate the vacant land resource with the planning area, so that viewers can get an idea of where and how much growth can be accommodated.

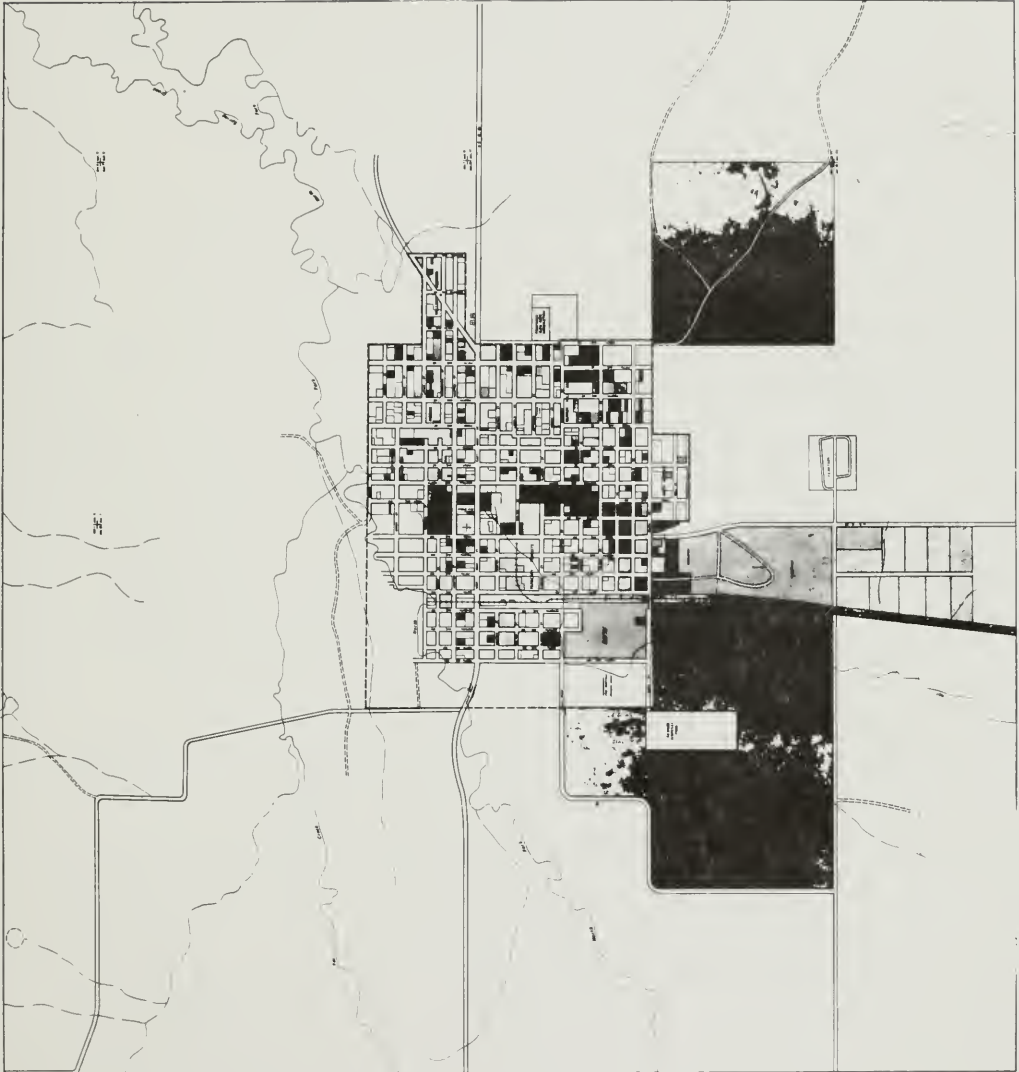
A public facilities overlay shows the water and sewer system, public parks and recreation facilities, health and medical facilities, schools, administrative and police and fire facilities and a second overlay shows high ground water, flooding characteristics of surface waters and topography. Clear plastic overlays and printed maps of both are available at the planning board office.

These visual aids will serve as a tool for identifying problems with present land use and assist in future management and regulatory programs to develop well planned growth of the area.

The narrative description also serves several functions in the development of land use policies. This narrative will define land use problems within the city limits and the surrounding planning area and make recommendations for land use policies and implementation.

EXISTING LAND USE OF THE URBAN AREA OF WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MONTANA

RESIDENTIAL	95.85 Acres	18.58%
COMMERCIAL	23.58 Acres	4.57%
INDUSTRIAL	28.15 Acres	5.46%
UTILITIES	6.20 Acres	1.20%
PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND LANDS	32.96 Acres	6.39%
AGRICULTURAL	75.33 Acres	14.60%
VACANT	72.95 Acres	14.14%
STREETS AND ALLEYS	<u>180.98 Acres</u>	<u>35.07%</u>
TOTAL LAND AREA	516.00 Acres	100.00%



CHAPTER IV
LAND USE PROBLEMS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LAND USE PROBLEMS

I. PROBLEMS WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS

- A. Suitable building sites are becoming limited within the city. The open areas in the northwestern and western parts of town are in the flood plain, making them unsuitable for building sites.
- B. Portions of the Wellman, Mayn and Murray Hill Additions have depressed topography where city sewer is not available because the areas are too low to connect to the system.
- C. Upkeep of vacant lots is poor and many of these lots are overgrown with weeds.
- D. Commercial uses are concentrated in the downtown area, where there is limited off-street parking. Large vehicles, such as four-wheel drive trucks and recreational vehicles, using the on-street parking, create poor visibility at intersections.
- E. The industrial area in the western portion of the city is unsightly.
- F. Haphazard placement of buildings on city lots causes many appearance and planning problems.
- G. Placement of residential housing in commercial and industrial areas reduces the value of housing and uses up lands better suited to commercial and industrial uses.
- H. A lack of adequate street surfacing and storm drainage facilities creates erosion and runoff problems. Maintenance of existing facilities is limited because of the city's lack of equipment and manpower.

II. PROBLEMS OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS

- A. The appearance of the industrial sites south of town is unappealing.
- B. The land north of the city is in the flood plain and not suitable for future growth.
- C. Maintenance of roads in subdivisions, particularly, snow removal, has caused problems.
- D. Mobile homes and unsightly out-buildings in subdivisions are unattractive.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

I. RECOMMENDATIONS WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS

- A. Annexation of well planned additions to the city would alleviate the lack of suitable building sites. Because the area north of the city is in the flood plain, it is not suitable for future growth. Ideally industrial growth should be encouraged to the east of the city where prevailing winds would carry smoke and dust away from the residential areas, but present land use patterns have already established the industrial sector in the southwestern quadrant. Residential growth is occurring in the southeastern quadrant. Because of these natural barriers and present growth patterns, residential development is recommended in the areas directly east and south of the city, east of U.S. Highways 12 and 89. City sewer and water could be made available to well designed subdivisions in these areas.
- B. At present, the only way to correct the sewer problem in the areas of town that do not have sewer service would be to install pumping stations. Providing service to these areas would open this land to building.
- C. Vacant lots in established areas should be kept free from trash and weeds, to assure that they do not detract from the appearance and value of adjacent property. The city should establish and enforce ordinances that would require property owners to do this.
- D. An area along East Main Street, running west from the city limits to Third Avenue S.W. and south along Third Avenue S.W. should be zoned as the Central Business District to preserve this area for commercial expansion.
- E. Businesses should be encouraged to remove old buildings and establish parking areas to provide more off-street parking in the downtown area. The city should establish and enforce ordinances that would restrict parking of large vehicles on Main Street in the business district.
- F. The city should establish regulations concerning industrial sites. These sites should be cleaned up and screening or vegetative buffers should be constructed when they are adjacent to residential property.

- G. A minimum lot size should be established for all types of construction. Setback and sideyard requirements should be established. Accessory building requirements, skirting and tiedown requirements should be considered for mobile homes.
- H. The city should adopt regulations that would limit residential building in previously established industrial and commercial areas of town. This would preserve land for future industrial and commercial growth.
- I. The city should concentrate on a remedial maintenance program for existing streets and storm drainage facilities. Improvements and new facilities should be added whenever financially possible. The Street and Storm Drainage Facility Plan prepared by Robert Peccia and Associates in June of 1980 should be used as a guide when making any improvements or additions to the present systems.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS

- A. The industrial sites south of town should construct screening or plant vegetative buffers where they are adjacent to residential property.
- B. Industrial growth should be encouraged southwest of the city limits, since industry has already been established in that area. The sewage disposal pond in that area would make residential growth undesirable, but it should not adversely effect industry.
- C. Residential growth should be encouraged in the areas south and east of town. This land would be adjacent to already established residential additions and would have little interference from commercial or industrial uses.
- D. The Meagher County Subdivision Regulations should be carefully followed when planning a growth area.
- E. The County Commissioners have a policy of not excepting dedication of subdivision roads as new county roads, because of the inability to maintain the present road system. Subdividers should be required to establish home owners associations that will provide maintenance.
- F. Subdividers should be encouraged to develop good restrictive covenants that would protect public health and safety and enhance property values.

CHAPTER V
PUBLIC SERVICES
AND FACILITIES

PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

In an effort to gain citizen input concerning the public services and facilities of the city, the planning board prepared a community survey. In this survey, the citizens were asked to rate the quality of each service and facility and select first, second and third choices for improvement. After a thorough review of the questionnaire it was determined that the four most serious concerns of the community are:

1. Water
2. Law Enforcement
3. Sewer and Street Surfacing (rated equally)
4. Parks and Recreation

A complete copy of the results of the survey can be obtained at the office of the Meagher County Planning Board.

GOVERNMENT

The city of White Sulphur Springs is organized under the mayor-council form of municipal government. The mayor and the four council members, two elected from each precinct, conduct the business of the city at a regularly scheduled meeting, held on the first Monday of every month.

A nine-member planning board, appointed under the provisions of the Montana Code Annotated, # 76-1-201, is responsible to the council for matters pertaining to city planning and development. The board is also responsible to the county to help with planning and review functions.

The city is under the new Montana State Building Code, which provides for minimum construction standards within the community.

The City Hall, built in 1966, located at 105 West Hampton, supports the majority of city governmental functions. This building houses the fire department, ambulance service and library, and provides limited joint-use space for the city clerk and treasurer.

FIRE PROTECTION

The constitution and by-laws of the White Sulphur Springs Fire Department gives it's organization date as December 1891. The first fire barn stood behind the present day Mint Bar. It was later moved to the site where City Hall now stands. In 1891 there were two companies, comprised of 17 men each. Eligibility requirements included that a person be "of the age of eighteen years, of good moral character, and a resident of this city" before formally applying for membership in this elective organization. The first motorized fire fighting equipment was acquired in the early 1920's.

The present fire department has twenty-eight trained volunteer members. The department has three trucks, two of which are hose trucks and one a self-contained water pumping truck. The fire station is located at City Hall. According to the local fire marshal, the facilities are well maintained and the department has the necessary equipment to operate effectively. As indicated by the January 1980 survey, the citizens feel that the department provides good service to the community.

With the exception of the summer months, there is sufficient water and pressure available to handle major fires. During the time when water is in limited supply, citizens are asked to restrict their use of water in the event of a major fire. The hydrants are inspected periodically by the city crew, with the assistance of the fire department.

The present fire insurance rating for the city is a class 7. In order to raise this rating to a class 6, it would be necessary to replace or install additional mains in certain areas of the city, rehabilitate certain hydrants to increase their yield per minute, and purchase one more pumper truck that has the ability to pump 750 or more gallons per minute. The city has attempted to correct those problems that they can, but limited financial resources prevent the purchase of a new truck and the construction of an extensive cross connected water system in the commercial district. A class 6 rating would, however, result in minor savings on both household and commercial fire premiums in the community.

The city is allowed to levy 2 mills per year for fire service and the department presently uses the full 2 mills to provide the existing service.

The rural portion of Meagher County has been divided into seven fire districts. The area outside the city limits of White Sulphur Springs is located in fire district # 1. Each district has a fire chief, assistant

fire chief and a volunteer crew. The State of Montana provides training meetings twice a year for these crews. The Meagher County Sheriff serves as the County Rural Fire Warden and his under-sheriff is the assistant warden. The city fire department does not provide assistance outside the city limits unless it has an agreement with an individual party or business to do so.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

White Sulphur Springs and Meagher County are served by a county-owned ambulance service. On April 8, 1969 the Meagher County Commissioners established an ambulance advisory board and took over the operation. Before this time the local mortuary provided emergency transportation.

At present the county owns two ambulances which are housed at the city fire station. The volunteer fire department of White Sulphur Springs maintains these vehicles. The attendants and drivers are volunteer firemen or Emergency Medical Technicians, trained to provide this service. Drivers and attendants are paid by the county. The rate of pay is determined on a basis of loaded miles transported.

The local ambulance service is funded by county tax dollars. 3 mills are levied each year. A users fee based on a flat rate, plus a charge for mileage, helps to cover the cost of maintaining an ambulance service at the local level.

Recently air ambulance service has been made available to this area. Both helicopter and airplane service are available to Billings through St. Vincent's Hospital and to Great Falls by the Deaconess Hospital and Biszak Ambulance Company. Helicopter service is used more often than airplane service, because of the local geographic structure and weather conditions. A lighted landing pad located close to the hospital, should be considered to provide a safe site for the landing of helicopters and the loading of patients.

Each air ambulance brings in a medical team to work with the doctor to stabilize and prepare a patient for transporting. Once the patient is stabilized and loaded into the aircraft, the estimated transporting time to either the Great Falls or Billings facility is one-half hour.

The Emergency Medical Technician Program was established in Meagher County in June of 1979. In order for a person to become certified as an EMT he must be at least 18 years old and in good health, hold a current advance first aid card, and a current cardio-pulmonary resuscitation card. He must take the National Registry and state approved EMT course and have six months of active ambulance experience. He must then successfully pass both the written and practical tests to receive certification with the National Registry and the Montana Board of Medical Examiners.

Registered Emergency Medical Technicians must be re-certified every two years, which requires a current CPR certification, accumulation of at least 48 hours of continuing education, the 20 hour Department of Transportation refresher course and again successfully pass both the written and practical tests.

With the addition of the Emergency Medical Technician Program and air ambulance service, a well-rounded system of emergency transportation and care is available to the area.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

Meagher County and the City of White Sulphur Springs support and maintain one public library, located in the city hall building at 105 W. Hampton Street. It is open to the public five days a week, Tuesday through Saturday, from 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.

The library has over 8,000 books on it's shelves and receives six periodicals by subscription. Other periodicals are donated to the library by local citizens. Materials located in the State Library in Helena and the University Libraries in Missoula, Dillion, Bozeman and Billings are accessible through an inter-library lending service. There is a paperback book exchange at the library. There is no book mobile service to outlying areas in the county.

One librarian is employed. A board of trustees, appointed by the city council and the county commissioners, governs the functions of the library.

The city provides the facility and maintenance of it as their contribution of support. The county can levy a maximum of 3 mills. The 1980-81 fiscal budget is .81 mill.

As indicated by the January 1980 survey, the citizens feel that the library provides good service to the community.

WATER SYSTEM

The City of White Sulphur Springs has had a municipal water system since 1897. It is a gravity flow system and the source is Willow Creek, located about two and one-half miles southeast of the city, in the foothills of the Castle Mountains.

Water flows through an eight inch steel transmission line from the intake dam to the storage reservoir, a distance of approximately 16,300 feet. The elevation difference between the intake structure and the reservoir is approximately 410 feet. Water flows from the reservoir through a twelve inch steel transmission line to the distribution system. This system consists of four, six, ten and twelve inch water mains, constructed of various different materials and added to the system through the years, as additional lines were needed. Reduced pressure and small flows of water are evident in areas served by the smaller lines. In the parts of town where hot sulphur ground-water exists, lines deteriorate faster than normal.

The water supplied by Willow Creek is of excellent quality, based on a sample taken during June of 1978 and tested by the State Department of Health. The water tested had a total hardness of eight, which means that the water would be classified as very soft. In 1979 the city made improvements to bring the turbidity of the supply within the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The existing diversion dam and reservoir were altered to include an infiltration gallery, located below 36 inches of select sand. The infiltration pipe was installed parallel to and upstream from the existing dam structure. A new concrete face was installed on the downstream side of the dam to protect against erosion. The estimated cost of this project was \$109,000.00, and was funded by a 100% U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Block Grant.

The quantity of water available for the White Sulphur Springs area was observed and measured through the summer and fall months of 1979. From this observation it becomes apparent that Willow Creek has the capacity to supply water to the present population of 1,400 people. It is necessary to have sufficient capacity in the eight inch transmission line to replenish the reservoir during the lower usage hours. The capacity of this line has been able to refill the reservoir during the nighttime, but does not have

any reserve capacity during maximum demand periods. The storage reservoir also provides the function of supplying fire flows during a major fire. Insurance Services Offices recommends that a flow of 2,500 gpm be available for a two hour period. During this period there should also be a flow available that is equal to the maximum day average demand. This means the reservoir should provide a reserve of 300,000 gpm for the two hour fire flow. There is 300,000 gallons of storage available in the reservoir.

The City of White Sulphur Springs does not have a meter on the transmission line which supplies water for the city, nor do they have individual meters for the consumers. The city, therefore, has no record of the amount of water being delivered to the distribution system or being consumed by the users. During the spring and summer of 1979, a float recorder was placed in the reservoir to measure actual water use. The following table tabulates the findings of this measurement process.

WATER USAGE

<u>April 26 - May 3, 1979</u>			<u>July 12 - 20, 1979</u>	
	<u>*gpm</u>	<u>**gpcd</u>	<u>gpm</u>	<u>gpcd</u>
Maximum hour	350	360	1,300	1,337
Average daily	280	288	740	761
Average nightly	155	159	155	159

*gpm -- gallons per minute

**gpcd -- gallons per capita daily

Statistical data from other Montana cities which have consumption records indicate that the average annual usage is about 200 gpcd and the maximum day usage is about 600 to 650 gpcd for unmetered systems. From the above table it becomes apparent that the per capita usage in White Sulphur Springs is considerably higher than other Montana cities, even those that do not meter their individual customers.

There is considerable nighttime loss in the system; 155 gpm or 159 gpcd. If this were reduced to 50 gpcd, the loss usage figures for White Sulphur Springs would be comparable to other similar Montana cities. This loss in water during the night could be from leaks in water mains or service lines which go undetected because of the coarse gravel which is prevalent in the area. The loss could also be through improperly maintained plumbing fixtures, which are leaking through water faucets or water closets.

During the summer months, when water usage is at it's peak due to irrigation of lawns and gardens, the city imposes an odd-even watering system to insure an adequate supply of water for domestic use. Measurements indicated that irrigation on the south side of town was greater than irrigation on the north side.

The high usage for the city would dictate that increased efforts should be made to encourage the people to conserve water. The alternate day irrigation restrictions should be continued. If citizens do not cooperate in voluntary conservation measures, the city should consider installation of meters on a city wide basis or on those users who have demonstrated that they are unwilling to practice water conservation. However, the January 1980 survey indicated that 92% of the community does not favor water meters.

A remedial maintenance program for the distribution system should be initiated, providing eventual replacement of water mains within the existing system. This replacement should be conducted on an "as needed basis" with trouble spots receiving first priority. No water line should be less than six inches. If smaller lines are discovered during this program, they should be replaced with a line six inches or larger, to be determined by the function of each line.

Even though our water supply is adequate for the present population, the city should be considering alternative or supplemental water sources. The city should be prepared to meet the need for services in the event of a major population growth.

Improvements should be made to the existing eight inch transmission line that would increase the capacity flow and provide a much needed reserve capacity in the total supply to the city.

Again the survey indicated that the citizens feel our water service is good, but they also indicated that water is the number one priority for improvement.

SEWER SYSTEM

The community of White Sulphur Springs has a public sewer system, originally constructed in 1916. A collection system of six, eight, ten and twelve inch sewer mains carry sewage from throughout the city to a collection point near the southwest corner of town. From this point a twelve inch outfall line continues on to the treatment facilities, located further southwest. Sewage treatment is presently handled by a nineteen acre wastewater stabilization pond. The collection system, outfall line and treatment facilities have a capacity that is adequate for the present population and would accommodate a population growth of approximately 1,000 additional people. This system meets present state and federal standards.

Approximately 4% of the city does not have access to the collection system, because of depressed elevation. Those homes that are not available to the system have individual septic tanks. Sewer service has been extended to all topographically feasible areas within the city limits.

For many years the city has been having problems with the twelve inch cast iron sewer line on Main Street from Central Avenue to Third Street Southwest. The ground water flowing through this area is hot sulphur water which reaches temperatures as high as 135 degrees fahrenheit. This line is a trunk outfall which serves approximately 75 blocks of the collection system. This represents approximately 77% of the total flow in the system.

Because of the chronic problems with this line, a television inspection was performed in 1976, which showed the condition of the pipe, as viewed through the TV camera, to vary from good to very poor. The inspection was able to cover only 428 feet of the total length of 780 feet, because of blockages.

Since this time, the city has continued to have problems with this line. During the summer of 1979, while the city was attempting to repair the badly deteriorated manholes, an engineering firm was retained to observe the condition of the pipes and to make measurements of sewage flows throughout the area. Flow measurements indicated that there is considerable infiltration in the system. A measurement of the outfall to the lagoon was made. This flow was 427 gpm or 680,000 gpd. This would compare with an estimated domestic sewage flow from a population of 1,400 people of approximately 140,000 gpd.

Based on the history of the required maintenance on the trunk sewer line on Main Street and the observation of existing conditions by the consulting engineering firm, the city felt that immediate replacement of the line was required to maintain the integrity of the sanitary sewer system. The city has received an U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant to fund this project. The estimated cost of the project is \$130,000. This grant is a 75/25 matching fund grant. This means that the city's share of the project is estimated to be \$30,000. The city plans to sell revenue bonds to finance this. In order to generate revenue to re-pay these bonds the city will raise their sewer users rates.

The project is presently underway, with clay pipe being used to replace the cast iron pipe, in an attempt to reduce corrosion due to sulphur water.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The White Sulphur Springs area and Meagher County are served by a consolidated City-County police force. The department is headed by the county sheriff, with the under-sheriff as second in command. They also employ two full-time deputies, one part-time deputy and a night dispatcher.

During the day hours of 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. the sheriff and under-sheriff are on duty at the jail, located at 101 W. Crawford Street. They handle the dispatch duties and respond to all emergencies during the day hours. The sheriff also serves as the county coroner.

The department has two fully equipped patrol cars. One is a 1978 Chevrolet, used chiefly by the deputies for patrolling, the other is a 1979 Chevrolet, used by the sheriff. A base dispatching unit is located at the jail and a relay dispatching unit at the home of the night dispatcher.

The jail was built in 1917. The structure is sound, but remodeling would be beneficial to update the building. The jail has the capacity to hold eight prisoners. Women are generally transported to Townsend to be contained, because the county has no matron to provide care for these prisoners. The facility is periodically inspected by the State of Montana. At the last inspection several recommendations were made to bring the jail up to the present state standards. The items all had to do with the care of prisoners. They included re-painting, hot water in the cells, and coveralls for the prisoners to wear. The sheriff has attempted to correct all

of these, and he feels that the next inspection will result in approval by the State.

According to the present sheriff there are several things that are necessary to improve the quality of the law enforcement. Those items of priority would be another full-time deputy to provide better coverage of patrolled shifts, a matron to provide care for the female prisoners, a 24-hour dispatch service established at the jail and resident deputies in Ringling and Martinsdale. Equipment needs include a camera for the photographic identification of prisoners, updated finger print equipment, and a four-wheel drive vehicle for transportation in the rural and mountainous areas of the county.

The survey indicated that citizens feel our law enforcement is poor, which suggests that the additional manpower and equipment is necessary.

The Sheriff's Department presently operates on a budget of approximately \$78,200.00 per year. Raising additional revenue for this is hampered by state laws that regulate the amount of mill levies that can be imposed to generate revenue.

SOLID WASTE

White Sulphur Springs has a refuse collection service provided by a private individual who is contracted by the county. Each user is charged \$60.00 per year on the property tax statement. Commercial users are charged the same \$60.00 per year by the county and the contractor bills them for additional service that he provides. Refuse is picked up once a week for residential users and as arranged for commercial users. Those people residing outside the city limits either have a collection arrangement with the county or use the public disposal site located three and one-half miles south of town. The site is open three days each week; Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. There is no additional fee charged to use the site. Some citizens have indicated that the hours do not meet their needs, but staffing the landfill has presented a problem when the county has considered additional hours or days. A County Refuse Board supervises the functions of the landfill.

EDUCATION

Early schools provided social and cultural contact for the community as well as education for the youth. The school has diminished as a focal point in community life, but the need for a complete education program is becoming increasingly important. This need must be recognized and the school program continually revised as society and technology advance.

During the 1980-81 school year Meagher County maintained one elementary school and one combined junior and senior high school in the White Sulphur Springs area. The total public school enrollment in White Sulphur Springs at the present time is 381 students.

The number of class rooms in each building is adequate for current enrollment. The county superintendents office indicated that both schools have adequate space. Both sites have adequate parking and bus loading space, and both buildings are in generally good condition.

The schools are located within convenient walking distance of pupils homes with the exception of rural situations, where bussing is necessary. Both school sites are off major arterials which minimize hazards to students and alleviates potential inconvenience for motorists.

All existing school facilities are adequate for the foreseeable future. The county superintendents office reports that the school board does a good job maintaining the White Sulphur Springs School District. The average cost to educate a student in White Sulphur Springs is approximately \$2,052.00 per year. The school budget is raised through mill levies.

1980-81 Mill Levies

District High School Levy	25.56 mills
County-Wide High School Levy	15.00 mills
District Elementary School Levy	54.46 mills
County-Wide Elementary School Levy	25.00 mills

The county-wide levy is divided proportionately to each elementary school in the county, based on the number of students enrolled in each school. State funds also supplant the budget.

The survey indicated that citizens would like to have the schools and the city share programs and facilities whenever possible.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

YEAR:	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
ENROLL- MENT	411	420	438	437	434	461	423	444	425	393	381

(These figures represent a total of both the Elementary and High Schools)

FACILITY SUMMARY

	No. of classrooms	No. of pupils	site size	date built	date of additions
Elementary	18	192	2 acres	1921	1974 & 1977
Jr. & Senior High School	13	189	3 acres	1956	1965(Jr. High)

MEDICAL FACILITIES

Mountain View Memorial Hospital was built in 1950. It began service in 1951 and employed 2 registered nurses and 1 doctor. It's first attempt at medical practice was short lived, and it closed in 1952. In 1956 the hospital was re-opened as a non-profit organization and has been in continuous operation since. The original building housed an 8 bed hospital unit, a nursing home in the basement and a clinic.

In 1978 the present nursing home was constructed as an addition to the original hospital building. The new addition was designed so that many of it's facilities could serve both the hospital and the nursing home. A new kitchen and dining room is located in the addition. A centrally located nursing station was designed so that the staff could monitor both the hospital and the nursing home at the same time. A new nursery was constructed, conveniently near the nursing station. The nursing home has 30 semi-private beds and 1 private room. The full basement under the new addition is used for central supply and general storage. Future use of a portion of the basement for physical therapy and laundry is being considered.

The addition provided much needed space and has allowed for expansion of over-crowded facilities in the hospital building. The business office, X-ray facility, laboratory and physical therapy room have all been expanded. The operating room, delivery room and the patients rooms have all been remodeled. The hospital still has 8 beds.

Not only has the addition allowed for expansion, but it has increased employment and patient care. The hospital and nursing home now employ 51 people and they are licensed for skilled, intermediate and V.A. care, Medicare and Medicaid.

The basement of the original structure is now used for other medical services. The largest portion of the basement is used for the clinic, which has 4 examining rooms, a waiting room, a receptionist office, and doctors offices. At present the area is served by 1 doctor.

Other services that are available are Mental Health, Problem Drinking and Family Planning. The Mental Health Center is open all day on Wednesdays only. Family Planning is available by appointment through the clinic.

The hospital meets the present state and federal standards. Many surgeries can be performed here, with the exception of specialized cases. These are referred to hospitals in Helena, Billings or Great Falls. The X-ray and laboratory departments can perform most of the necessary procedures and tests.

The total facility is effective and meets the present needs of the community. Based on historic population growth trends the unit will also meet the future needs of the area.

MUSEUMS

White Sulphur Springs is the home of a local museum, commonly referred to as the "Castle". This house was completed in 1892 by B.R. Sherman, stockman and mine owner. The gray stone, chateau-type structure has long been a landmark on it's hilltop overlooking the town of White Sulphur Springs. The Castle was sold in 1905 to Michael Donahoe, and in 1960 his heirs gave the house to the Meagher County Historical Society. The Society restored the house and transformed it into a museum, officially dedicated on August 30, 1967. The antique furnishings come from families throughout the county in memory of their pioneer ancestors. The museum also contains many artifacts of the mining era of the county.

The Castle is a locally supported effort to preserve the history of Meagher County. Maintenance of it is financed by an admission fee, charged for touring the museum. This is the main source of revenue for the Society and presently supports the Castle adequately. While the interior of the

structure has been restored and is in fair condition, the rock exterior has deteriorated over the years. The Society is presently looking into funding sources to provide for the necessary repairs.

The Meagher County Historical Society also owns the old Presbyterian Church building located on Central Avenue. This structure was built in Diamond City in 1864, where it was used as a Good Templers and Masonic Lodge building. In 1882 it was moved to White Sulphur Springs where it served the community for 85 years. The Society is planning to move this building to the grounds at the Castle, where it can be used as an annex to the museum. Both buildings have been placed on the National Historical Register.

SENIOR CITIZENS FACILITIES

Meagher County Senior Citizens, Inc. is a non-profit corporation organized in 1972. Its purpose is to provide nutritional meals to the low income elderly and to provide a social gathering place for the senior citizens of the community. The administrative duties are conducted by elected officers. Each year a President, Vice-President, Secretary and two directors are elected. The corporation hires a Treasurer to handle the accounts. It has a membership of approximately 85 people, who pay an annual membership fee of \$2.00. The nationally excepted age for membership of such an organization is 55 years or over.

Meagher County Senior Citizens, Inc. maintains a senior citizens center located at 101 1st Avenue S.E. A noon meal is served at the center five times a week. Approximately 60 meals are served each day. In addition to this 15 meals are delivered to shut-ins each day. The center holds weekly card games and on Monday of each week they hold a blood pressure clinic, where senior citizens can have their blood pressure checked free of charge. Whenever special entertainment is scheduled in other cities, the center organizes bus transportation or car caravans for those who wish to attend.

The center is well equipped with exercise and entertainment equipment. The corporation hires a full-time cook and part-time kitchen helper. Green Thumb, a federally funded program provides someone to clean, set tables for meals and make home deliveries.

The annual operating budget is approximately \$27,200.00. Meagher County provides \$3,000.00 annually for maintenance of the center, insurance and utilities. Other sources of revenue are Title III, the Old Americans Act and Title VII, the Commodities Act. The remainder of the budget is raised through meal donations, membership and funds donated for use of the facility for non-related functions. The center asks for a meal donation of \$1.00 per meal. Anyone who cannot afford this is served free.

The survey indicated that the community feels the Senior Citizens services and facilities are good. The corporation provides a needed service for the community, and they would like to provide more activities in the future, such as, health programs, hobby programs and social gatherings.

RECREATION

Public recreation within White Sulphur Springs is limited. At present the community has two parks. Rader Park, located on Chilton Street, is designed to serve the community needs for picnicing and provides a rest area for travelers. The park does not, however, have restroom facilities. The city park, located on Hampton Street, is a large park, but mainly undeveloped. In the northeastern corner of the park there is an area set aside for baseball, with a few bleachers and a backstop. At the southern edge of the park, near the city hall, there is a playground with swings, a slide, a jungle gym, tetertotters, and a merry-go-round. This playground is probably not used as much as it would be if it were located in a residential part of town.

The survey indicated a need for additional recreational facilities. The Meagher County Civic Development Corporation, established to promote recreation in Meagher County, has investigated the feasibility of a multi-purpose community center to be located in White Sulphur Springs. The proposed facility would house an indoor swimming pool, bowling alley, and a community room that would be large enough to be used for roller skating and dancing. The cost of a facility of this kind would be in excess of 1½ million dollars.

While public recreation is limited in White Sulphur Springs, outdoor recreation throughout the county is excellent. Meagher County has many water areas available for recreational use, and all that is required to maintain this valuable asset is to keep it free from pollution and available

to the public. Water recreation provides boating, fishing, swimming and picnicing.

Winter recreation is becoming increasingly popular. Showdown Ski Area is located in the northern part of Meagher County, just inside the county line. Showdown is accessible from both White Sulphur Springs and Great Falls by U.S. Highway 89. The closest overnight accommodations are in White Sulphur Springs.

Cross-country skiing and snowmobiling are becoming popular sports and Meagher County supports both of these activities through it's natural setting. The large amount of National Forest land within Meagher County provides easy public access for these sports.

Future potential exists for development of new recreation sites and expansion of existing sites. The reputation of the Smith River and other Meagher County streams has drawn interest to fishing. Expansion of fishing access sites, including camping facilities to accommodate increasing numbers of tourists will become necessary to alleviate overcrowding and avoid potential pollution problems. Increased interest in historical areas will bring more vistors to Meagher County, however, many of these areas need protection and development.

Hunting activities are usually well organized by private interests and need little development except improved access to public lands.

There are four existing multi-purpose reservoirs used for fishing, swimming and boating. These are: Lake Sutherlin (North Fork Smith River Reservoir), the Bair, the Martinsdale and the Newlan Creek Reservoirs. The quality of Meagher County's natural environment is it's greatest asset. For this reason, caution should be excerised during new development to prevent pollution or other harm to the natural environment.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation poses a problem for White Sulphur Springs and Meagher County. The combination of vast distances and small population base does not easily lend itself to large investment in a sophisticated transportation system.

(1) AIRPORTS

There are no commercial airlines that serve White Sulphur Springs. The nearest airline services are in:

<u>LOCALE</u>	<u>DISTANCE FROM W.S.S.</u>
Billings	155 miles
Great Falls	100 miles
Bozeman	100 miles
Helena	75 miles

The existing facility that serves White Sulphur Springs is the city-county airport, located three miles south of town on Highway 89. The airport's functions are supervised by a board, appointed by the county commissioners and city council. It is maintained by a budget of .5 mill per year.

There are three hangers at the airport, two privately owned and one city-county owned. The city-county hanger is rented to individuals for plane storage. There are fuel pumps for 90% and 130% octane fuel.

A recent grant from the Federal Aviation Association has provided funds to make necessary improvements to the facility. The runway, sub-taxi ways and the tiedown apron have been refinished with an all weather surface. The runway has been reduced to 4,600 feet long by 60 feet wide. This size runway is efficient for an airport of this type. The beacon on the existing tower has been replaced and lighting has been added to the existing wind cone. Medium intensity runway lights have been installed. These are remote control operated by each plane using the facility. This type of system provides continual use of the airport without the expense of employing a man to maintain lighting operations at the facility. The airport now meets F.A.A. standards for a facility of it's kind. The improvements were designed with the future growth of the community in mind.

(2) BUSSES

Bus service is provided by the Rimrock Stage Line. It's daily round trip is from Billings to Helena and back. The Great Falls to Bozeman route was discontinued in 1975. The nearest major bus services are located in : Great Falls, 100 miles away; Bozeman, 100 miles away; Billings, 150 miles away; and Helena, 75 miles away.

(3) RAILROADS

Rail passenger service has been non-existent in Meagher County since it was discontinued in the late 1950's, at Ringling. The nearest passenger service was the AMTRAK at Livingston, 74 miles south, but that route through southern Montana from Glendive to Missoula was discontinued in 1979. Because of this discontinuation, the nearest access for rail passenger service is located in Havre, 210 miles north.

Rail freight service was available from White Sulphur Springs to Ringling by the White Sulphur Springs and Yellowstone Park Railroad, where it connected to the Milwaukee Railroad to provide nation-wide service. However, the recent abandonment of the Milwaukee Railroad has threatened the existence of the local railroad and it's future will depend on the continuation of service on the Milwaukee track by another provider.

(4) TRUCK FREIGHT TRANSPORT

There is truck freight service available to White Sulphur Springs, provided by the Salt Creek Freight Lines. The line makes a round-trip from Billings to Helena and back, where it provides connections with other locations. It ships machinery and parts, commodities, hardware supplies and general merchandise. This freight service currently meets the needs of the community.

(5) HIGHWAYS

White Sulphur Springs is served by two state highways. Highway 89 runs south from Great Falls through White Sulphur Springs and on to Livingston. Highway 12 provides the community with an access to Helena to the west and Billings to the east. These highways junction 3 miles east of the city, pass through on the Main Street, and junction again 9 miles south of the city. This through traffic creates cleaning and parking problems and a traffic hazard for the community.

The highways in Meagher County, with the exception of a portion of Highway 12, were constructed 30 to 40 years ago. A seven mile section of Highway 12, around the Lake Sutherlin area, was reconstructed in 1976 and is up to current highway standards. The remainder of the highway

system in the county is substandard and traffic is at an excessive capacity. The surface condition over most of the system is poor and there are no shoulders in many areas. Both the three-mile wye and the nine-mile wye, where Highways 89 and 12 junction, need to be reconstructed for safety reasons. The Deep Creek Canyon, while not in Meagher County, is a major transport route in the area. It has many curves which are not up to present standards. Winter snow and ice are a problem in both the Deep Creek Canyon and the Kings Hill area. Blowing snow has been known to close one or all of the routes into the area. Maintenance of the highways is provided by a state crew stationed at White Sulphur Springs. The Deep Creek Canyon is maintained by a crewman stationed at the section house, 16 miles west on Highway 12.

The following table shows the increase in traffic at two check points from 1973 to 1978.

LOCATION	MAJOR HIGHWAY AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC			
	1973 ADT All vehicles	1978 ADT All vehicles	CHANGE Number %	
8.0 miles south of W.S.S.	593	779	+186	+31.4%
3.0 miles north of W.S.S.	679	694	+ 15	+ 2.2%

Source -- Montana State Highway Commission Data

(6) STREETS AND LOCAL ROADS

The streets in White Sulphur Springs are in generally poor condition. The gravel streets need to be crowned for runoff and drainage ditches established. New gravel surfacing should be applied to most of these streets. About 15% of the streets in the city are paved. Some of these surface-treated streets have deteriorated to the point of being nearly indistinguishable from gravel streets. The city crew consists of two men, who are responsible for maintenance of all city services. Because of this, the amount of street maintenance that is done is limited. The survey indicated that citizens feel that street

surfacing and maintenance are poor. In June of 1980, a Street and Storm Drainage Plan was prepared for White Sulphur Springs, by Peccia and Associates of Helena. This plan analyses the street and storm drainage situation in the city and makes recommendations for improvements. Copies of this plan are available at the office of the planning board.

The roads in the outlying planning area are typical country roads. They all have gravel surfaces with the exception of the Fort Logan Road, which has a paved surface. The county is responsible for the maintenance of these roads. Maintenance and snow removal are problems, because of the large road system that the county has to maintain and the lack of equipment and manpower to do this.

UTILITIES

Electrical service to White Sulphur Springs is provided to the residents by Montana Power Company, via aerial lines. The service is generally good and a new sub-station is scheduled to increase capacity and reliability.

The overhead lines are old and it is urged that, as able, these lines be replaced by underground service to increase the quality of service, reduce maintenance costs and enhance the beauty of the city.

There is no natural gas service to the town and as a result heating is provided by fuel oil, propane, electricity and wood.

The town is named after it's natural hot water springs, which offer the exciting possibility of geothermal energy. The First National Bank of White Sulphur Springs has successfully completed a heating system for it's new building, which is utilizing the 125 degree water. A study is now underway, which proposes to use the springs to heat the two schools, the hospital and the courthouse. As energy costs rise and supplies dwindle, the prospects of a central heating system for the town, which would utilize the natural geothermal heat source becomes more desirable and practical.

COMMUNICATIONS

(1) TELEVISION

White Sulphur Springs receives four television stations: one from Helena, one from Butte and two from Great Falls. The Helena station comes to us direct. The other three stations are received with the aid of a translator, located in the Castle Mountains east of town. The possibility of bringing cable television to the area is presently under consideration.

(2) RADIO

Meagher County residents receive several radio stations, depending on the location one is situated in. The county receives three stations from Billings: KOOK, KGHL and KOIN; two from Great Falls: KMON and KFBB; one from Bozeman: KBOZ; and the White Sulphur Springs translator receives the Belgrade FM station KGVW.

(3) NEWSPAPERS

The weekly Meagher County News is published in White Sulphur Springs for the entire county. It is released on Thursday of each week. The Gazette from Billings, the Tribune from Great Falls and the Independent Record from Helena have a wide spread circulation in the area.

(4) POSTAL SERVICES

White Sulphur Springs has no residential postal delivery. Each resident must rent a box at the post office and pick up his mail there. Mail service is provided once a day from Helena and Billings. The Post Office has 648 boxes, and the majority of these are in use. There is no available space for the addition of more boxes for future use.

(5) TELEPHONE

Telephone services for the entire county is provided by Mountain States Telephone of the Bell Telephone System.

The majority of homes have private lines available to them, though there are still some party lines. Most of the homes outside the city limits are on party lines.

There is no operator stationed in White Sulphur Springs. Directory and operator assistance are available via a toll free line to livingston.

The aerial lines from White Sulphur Springs to Ringling have been removed and installed underground. This improvement will increase the quality of service, reduce maintenance costs and cause less disturbance of the natural setting. In new construction and reconstruction, the cable is usually buried for these reasons.

CHAPTER VI
HOUSING STUDY

HOUSING

Housing is one of the basic needs of man. A family's house is the gathering place for family activities and provides for many social needs as well as protecting the family members from the elements. Two surveys have recently been conducted in White Sulphur Springs to attempt to establish what the present housing situation is. The first of these surveys was conducted by the City of White Sulphur Springs in the spring of 1979. Its purpose was to look specifically at low-income and sub-standard housing. The second survey was conducted by the Meagher County Planning Board in January of 1980. This was a community survey to attempt to develop various types of data about the community. Within this survey there was a section of questions that dealt with housing. From these surveys a report of the data was compiled and an analysis of the housing situation was developed.

SUB-STANDARD HOUSING SURVEY

In the spring of 1979, the City of White Sulphur Springs prepared a Housing Assistance Plan. In connection with this plan, a survey of sub-standard housing was conducted. From this survey the following information was compiled.

There are five sections of town that lack city sewer facilities. All of these areas have depressed topography and sewer lines would require pumping stations to transport sewage to the city's main lines. Three of these areas are north of Main Street. The portion of the community north of Main Street has an inordinate number of sub-standard housing units, partially due to the lack of proper sewer service.

Those people conducting the survey found that there was a concentration of single mothers who live close to the poverty level in the northeastern section of town. Many of these women live in badly deteriorated housing.

The Farmers Home Administration has expressed a willingness to actively participate in aiding low-moderate and elderly housing for White Sulphur Springs. Of the 85 sub-standard units surveyed, 13 expressed a willingness to move into such housing if it should become available. If such a complex were built, some of those families, who live in the most seriously deteriorated units, would have a chance to move into decent housing and thereby free some of the property within the city for rehabilitation and new housing starts.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

In January of 1980 the Meagher County Planning Board, with the assistance of local high school students, conducted a community survey for White Sulphur Springs. Within this survey was a section of questions concerning housing, which produced the following information:

Housing Occupancy

Total Occupied Housing Units-----	481-----	95.2%
Vacant Seasonal Housing Units-----	11-----	2.2%
Vacant Housing for Sale-----	2-----	.4%
Vacant Unhabitable Housing-----	11-----	2.2%
(due to delapidation)		
Total Vacant Housing-----	24-----	4.8%
Total Housing Units	505	100.0%
Percentage of housing available for occupancy as of January 1980----		.4%

The percentages of the following statements are based on the number of households that responded to each question in the survey.

The present housing situation. 263 households responding.

renting	<u>41</u>	<u>15.6%</u>
buying	<u>81</u>	<u>30.8%</u>
own	<u>141</u>	<u>53.6%</u>

Types of dwelling occupied. 264 households responding.

mobile home	<u>45</u>	<u>17.0%</u>
single family	<u>196</u>	<u>74.2%</u>
multi-family	<u>23</u>	<u>8.7%</u>

Type of dwelling households would prefer to live in. 253 responding.

single family	<u>225</u>	<u>89.0%</u>
mobile home	<u>13</u>	<u>5.1%</u>
multi-family	<u>15</u>	<u>5.9%</u>

Age of dwellings. 259 responding.

Less than 2 years	<u>17</u>	<u>6.6%</u>
2 to 10 years	<u>43</u>	<u>16.6%</u>
11 to 20 years	<u>38</u>	<u>14.7%</u>
21 to 30 years	<u>42</u>	<u>16.2%</u>
31 to 40 years	<u>32</u>	<u>12.4%</u>
Over 40 years	<u>87</u>	<u>33.6%</u>

Dwelling unit problems. Percentages based on 259 households.

plumbing	<u>83</u>	<u>32.1%</u>
faulty kitchen stove, furnace or fireplace	<u>17</u>	<u>6.6%</u>
electrical wiring	<u>19</u>	<u>7.3%</u>
unsafe stairway or steps	<u>16</u>	<u>6.2%</u>
walls or ceiling need repair	<u>25</u>	<u>9.7%</u>
roof needs repair	<u>30</u>	<u>11.6%</u>
doors or windows need repair	<u>53</u>	<u>20.5%</u>
poor insulation	<u>71</u>	<u>27.4%</u>
cracks or bulges in walls or foundation	<u>23</u>	<u>8.9%</u>
broken windows	<u>18</u>	<u>7.0%</u>
other problems	<u>4</u>	<u>1.5%</u>

Households that would consider applying for low interest loans or grants to make dwelling improvements, if available. 251 responding.

yes	<u>111</u>	<u>44.2%</u>
no	<u>89</u>	<u>35.5%</u>
no opinion	<u>20</u>	<u>8.0%</u>
don't own dwelling	<u>31</u>	<u>12.4%</u>

The most important problems people have in obtaining housing.
334 responses.

financing	<u>159</u>	<u>47.6%</u>
available space to build	<u>71</u>	<u>21.3%</u>
lack of down payment	<u>63</u>	<u>18.9%</u>
racial bias	<u>1</u>	<u>.3%</u>
no problems	<u>11</u>	<u>3.3%</u>
lack of adequate housing for rent or sale	<u>19</u>	<u>5.7%</u>
other	<u>10</u>	<u>3.0%</u>

What kinds of new housing should be built in the area. 366 responses.

none	<u>18</u>	<u>4.9%</u>
low income complex	<u>70</u>	<u>19.1%</u>
single family housing	<u>99</u>	<u>27.0%</u>
mobile home parks	<u>49</u>	<u>13.4%</u>
senior citizen housing	<u>19</u>	<u>5.2%</u>
all of the above	<u>39</u>	<u>10.7%</u>
other	<u>3</u>	<u>.8%</u>

ANALYSIS OF HOUSING SITUATION

It is very apparent from these reports that housing is the major problem for White Sulphur Springs. Housing not only effects the people who live here at present, but it effects the prospective growth of the community. If there is not enough adequate housing for the present population, we cannot encourage economic growth that will bring new population into the area. Therefore, the housing situation must be remedied before we can approach new employment opportunities for White Sulphur Springs.

There are 505 housing units in the city. In January of 1980, 24 of those units were vacant. 22 of the vacant units are either seasonal homes or delapidated housing, which means that only 2 units, or .4% of the total housing in the city, were available to the housing market. A standard market factor normally required to accommodate mobility and changing demands for housing is 5% vacancy. The vacancy rate for White Sulphur Springs is very low and indicates the tight housing situation in the community.

The present population of White Sulphur Springs is approximately 1,400 people. The 1970 census data shows that the population was 1,200 people. This growth rate puts added pressure and urgency on the need for additional housing units.

Population statistics from the survey conducted by the planning board in January of 1980 indicated that approximately 24% of the people presently living in the community are over the age of 55 years. 6.5% of the population are females who are single heads of households. 9.2% of the population are persons over 60 years old, who are single heads of households. 19.1% of the housing units are one member households and 35.7% are two member households. These figures indicate that a senior citizens housing complex would be beneficial to the community. Not only would it provide adequate housing for the elderly, but it would re-introduce existing single family dwellings to the housing market.

A program to provide low interest loans should be made available to allow the low to moderate income households the opportunity to obtain adequate housing.

The need for rehabilitation present housing is also apparent. Programs should be sought to provide this rehabilitation.

low income housing project, directed toward housing for families is also needed.

Looking at these needs the City of White Sulphur Springs must adopt a course of action to remedy the situation. The course of action should include:

- 1) The drafting and adoption of a zoning ordinance that will encourage compatible and uniform development standards. By providing adequate multi-family and mobile home residential zoning, the community will encourage a wider choice of housing for market satisfaction.
- 2) The drafting and adoption of annexation policies that would provide compatible land use patterns for those transitional fringe areas around White Sulphur Springs, which will ultimately become part of the city.
- 3) Inter-governmental coordination between city and county that would foster the development of future land use patterns which afford a smooth, compatible transition from county to city.
- 4) A prevention maintenance program that will upgrade the life expectancy of older units and the serviceability of existing residential units. Particular emphasis should be placed on encouraging the concept of preventative maintenance as a continuing action to keep existing housing units serviceable.
- 5) A program geared to encourage and assist the development of elderly and low income housing projects. This program should provide data to private developers who are considering the undertaking of such projects.
- 6) A public information program that will continually inform citizens of new and existing State and Federal programs that are available to the community and the criteria that must be met to qualify for these programs.
- 7) A public information program that will inform citizens of the State Building Codes and how they effect White Sulphur Springs.

CHAPTER VII
POPULATION AND
ECONOMIC STUDY

POPULATION

<u>ESTIMATED POPULATION</u>					
1970*	1980**	1985***	1990***	1995***	2000***
1,200	1,400	1,435	1,470	1,507	1,545

* 1970 Census Data

** 1980 Population Estimate -- Census Bureau

*** 5% growth factor over 10 year period

Approximately 56% of the households in White Sulphur Springs responded to a survey conducted by the Meagher County Planning Board in January 1980. The survey reported five "minority households". Two of these households are American Indian. The other three are Spanish Surname households. There are no black or Puerto Rican households in the community.

The average household size is 3.4 persons per household. This compares very closely with the state average of 3.1 persons per household.

<u>POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS</u>			
0 - 4 years	6.6%	25 - 34 years	15.0%
5 - 9 years	8.6%	35 - 44 years	12.0%
10 - 14 years	6.6%	45 - 54 years	9.7%
15 - 19 years	11.3%	55 - 64 years	11.4%
20 - 24 years	6.6%	65 years and over	12.2%

ECONOMY

From information provided by the January 1980 survey, it appears that the community shops for 58% of their goods and services locally. The citizens would like to have more recreational and entertainment opportunities and clothing stores.

White Sulphur Springs is the only incorporated city in Meagher County. Approximately 2/3's of the population of the county resides here. Realistically, all of the non-farm income in the county is attributable to business and industry in and around the city.

NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN MEAGHER COUNTY*

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
Government	161	162	177	180	186
Manufacturing	120	107	146	169	104
Construction	5	(D)	4	6	7
Transportation, Communication, & Public Utilities	6	7	9	5	5
Trade	68	77	77	82	76
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	(D)	(D)	12	12	12
Services	69	92	94	92	96

(D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information.

A statistical analysis of Meagher County* showed that the average income was \$10,213.00 in 1975. Castle Mountain Corporation is the major non-farm employer in the area. They employ approximately 120 people and the average annual salary paid is \$10,000.00.

Figures compiled from the January 1980 survey showed that 206 households responded to a question concerning annual household income. Of those responding, 27, or 13.1%, were below poverty level and 64, or 31.1%, were above poverty level, but still met the low income criteria for HUD Section 8 Housing Assistance.

* Profile: Division of Research & Information Systems
Montana Department of Community Affairs

CHAPTER VIII
RECOMMENDED POLICIES

RELATED PLANNING

In order to provide data for the City of White Sulphur Springs and Meagher County the Meagher County Planning Board attempts to catalog and keep on file in their office other plans that have been developed for the area. The following information is a list of related plans:

Overall Economic Development Plan for Meagher County
Inter-County Development Corporation of Southwestern Montana

Overall Economic Development Plan for the Tri-County Area
Tri-Co economic Development Corporation
August 1979

Situation Statement - Huamn Resources Development Council
District IX
January 8, 1975

Meagher County Subdivision Regulations
Meagher County Planning Board
January 1975

Meagher County Comprehensive Plan
Meagher County Planning Board
July 1977

Comprehensive Area-Wide Water and Sewer Plan
Lewis & Clark, Broadwater and Meagher Counties
State of Montana Volume 8
1970

Meagher County - Wildland Fire Management Plan
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
1979

Master Plan for White Sulphur Springs Airport
Turnbull and Plummer, Inc.
March 1977

Smith River Drainage Inventory and Planning Investigation
Montana Department of Fish and Game
June 1973

Watershed Work Plan - Newlan Creek
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service
November 1969

Musselshell Planning Unit - Land Use Recommendations
Bureau of Land Management

Reconnaissance Ground Water and Geological Studies
Western Meagher County
S.L. Groff
1965

Reconnaissance Ground Water Studies
Wheatland, Eastern Meagher And Northern Sweet Grass Counties
S.L. Groff
1962

City of White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Street and Storm Drainage Plan
Robert Peccia and Associates
June 1980

Sewer and Water Plan for White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Meagher County Planning Board
June 1980

Capital Improvement Plan for White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Meagher County Planning Board
June 1980

Park and Recreation Plan for White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Meagher County Planning Board
May 1980

APPENDIX

RELATED PLANNING

In order to provide data for the City of White Sulphur Springs and Meagher County the Meagher County Planning Board attempts to catalog and keep on file in their office other plans that have been developed for the area. The following information is a list of related plans:

Overall Economic Development Plan for Meagher County
Inter-County Development Corporation of Southwestern Montana

Overall Economic Development Plan for the Tri-County Area
Tri-Co economic Development Corporation
August 1979

Situation Statement - Huamn Resources Development Council
District IX
January 8, 1975

Meagher County Subdivision Regulations
Meagher County Planning Board
January 1975

Meagher County Comprehensive Plan
Meagher County Planning Board
July 1977

Comprehensive Area-Wide Water and Sewer Plan
Lewis & Clark, Broadwater and Meagher Counties
State of Montana Volume 8
1970

Meagher County - Wildland Fire Management Plan
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
1979

Master Plan for White Sulphur Springs Airport
Turnbull and Plummer, Inc.
March 1977

Smith River Drainage Inventory and Planning Investigation
Montana Department of Fish and Game
June 1973

Watershed Work Plan - Newlan Creek
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service
November 1969

Musselshell Planning Unit - Land Use Recommendations
Bureau of Land Management

Reconnaissance Ground Water and Geological Studies
Western Meagher County
S.L. Groff
1965

Reconnaissance Ground Water Studies
Wheatland, Eastern Meagher And Northern Sweet Grass Counties
S.L. Groff
1962

City of White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Street and Storm Drainage Plan
Robert Peccia and Associates
June 1980

Sewer and Water Plan for White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Meagher County Planning Board
June 1980

Capital Improvement Plan for White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Meagher County Planning Board
June 1980

Park and Recreation Plan for White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Meagher County Planning Board
May 1980

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Roadside Geology of the Northern Rockies
David D. Alt and Donald W. Hyndman

Reconnaissance Ground Water Studies
Western Meagher County
S.L. Groff

Reconnaissance Ground Water Studies
Wheatland, Eastern Meagher and Northern Sweet Grass Counties
S.L. Groff

Meagher County Wildland Fire Management Plan
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Meagher County
An Early Pictorial History
Meagher County Historical Society

Meagher County Comprehensive Plan
Meagher County Planning Board

1970 Census - State Information System
Montana Department of Planning and Economic Development

Montana Population Estimates
Research and Information Systems Division
Montana Department of Community Affairs

Montana Population Projections
Research and Information Systems Division
Montana Department of Community Affairs

Public Fire Protection - Insurance Services Office
San Francisco, California 94104

Comprehensive Area-Wide Water and Sewer Plan
Lewis & Clark, Broadwater and Meagher Counties
Department of Planning and Economic Development

State of Montana - Department of Highways
Tentative Construction Program

Sewer Rate Analysis for White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Thomas, Dean & Hoskins, Inc.

Engineering Report for the Water System of White Sulphur Springs, Montana
Thomas, Dean & Hoskins, Inc.

